

9 September 2020

Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission

By email: kiaora@mhwc.govt.nz

Draft Wellbeing Outcomes Framework

Dear Sir/Madam

The New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA) wishes to provide feedback on the above consultation. The NZMA is New Zealand's largest medical organisation, with more than 5,000 members from all areas of medicine. The NZMA aims to provide leadership of the medical profession, and to promote professional unity and values, and the health of all New Zealanders. We recognise the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi and the special obligations to Māori, particularly to ensure equity and active protection. Current disparities in health outcomes between Māori and non-Māori are unacceptable. The NZMA is committed to advocating for policies in health and the social and wider determinants of health that urgently address these disparities and contribute to equity of health outcomes.

1. We congratulate the Commission on the development of this draft wellbeing outcomes framework. We note that the purpose of the outcomes framework is to support the mental health and wellbeing system to understand, measure and inform improved outcomes for Aotearoa, at both population and service levels. We are strongly supportive of all the six areas of wellbeing that have been identified in the draft framework. We note that these areas are overlapping and interconnected, and that the 'for everyone' and 'for Māori' sections represent related concepts of wellbeing from different world views. Nevertheless, there are some important gaps in the draft framework areas that we believe require consideration before it is finalised. We elaborate on these in our feedback below.

2. There is currently no mention of the role of drugs or alcohol. We contend that a framework on wellbeing outcomes that is to be used to support the mental health system should specifically identify protection against the harms of drugs and alcohol given the significant burden these substances have on mental health and addiction.

3. Te Reo is currently not mentioned anywhere in the framework. We suggest that Te Reo should overarch the six areas of wellbeing for Māori and could also be specifically mentioned in the third, fourth and sixth areas of the framework.

4. While there are several references to the environment across a number of areas in the framework, there is no mention of climate change or planetary health (which includes climate

change but also the integrity of natural ecosystems, use of land, pollution, biodiversity, health of the oceans and rivers, etc). We suggest that it would be useful for the framework to specifically identify planetary health given its central importance to human health and wellbeing.¹

5. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the impact that a pandemic (and the responses to it) have on mental health and wellbeing. Accordingly, we suggest that it may be useful for the framework to add a specific point about protecting against the mental health and wellbeing impacts of pandemics.

6. We received some feedback that the six areas of wellbeing as they stand are too wordy. It may be worth considering whether these can be shortened by perhaps not listing out all the specific examples that are currently given. Finally, the specifics of how the outcome areas in the framework are to be achieved and resourced on a population and service level will be the key to the success or otherwise of the framework. As KPIs tend to drive the development and resourcing of mental health and addiction services, the development and content of these KPIs will be crucial.

We hope our feedback is helpful and look forward to learning the outcome of this consultation.

Yours sincerely



Dr Kate Baddock
NZMA Chair

¹ Gupta J, et al. Communicating the health of the planet and its links to human health. Lancet Planetary Health 2019 May;3(5):e204-e206. Available from [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(19\)30040-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(19)30040-3/fulltext)